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ABSTRACT

Intended for teachers of seventh graders, this communication skills program has two main objectives: (1) to develop in students a heightened awareness of the role communication plays in the totality of their lives; and (2) to begin to develop in students an awareness of their responsibility for their own communication. The program is the first in a series of six, 10-lesson programs. Lessons one through five each consist of a "method" section, in which one or more teaching methods is described, and a "purpose" section, in which the reasons for the activities are explained. These lessons are as follows: (1) Introduction; (2) Student-Teacher Relations; (3) Non-Verbal Communication; (4) Student-Parent Relations; and (5) Self-Image. In lessons six through nine, instructions are given for videotaped group presentations in which students write and perform a skit in which they represent the people they see themselves being when they are adults. The final lesson serves as a review and evaluation. (A parent letter, two parent questionnaires, a student mastery test, and a list of definitions are appended.) (ARH)

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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

PROGRAM I

SEVENTH GRADE-LEVEL I

TEACHER MANUAL

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January 21, 1986

INTRODUCTION

Recent reports by the "Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in Undergraduate Education"* and the "Association of American Colleges Committee"** have expressed concern about the effectiveness of fundamental courses at the heart of an undergraduate curriculum. The courses should, but too often don't, encourage learning, as opposed to training. They are courses which should aid students to become more skilled information users, rather than mere collectors of information.

The Governor of Massachusetts 1985 Educational Reform Bill (passed as Chap. 188 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth in Sept of 1985) spoke of teaching students at the elementary level such skills as "speaking, listening, critical thinking, and problem solving."+ The Bill did not mention these skills at the secondary level. It may be that it is assumed they are mastered at the lower level. College professors are finding that not to be the case.

We have long been concerned with the 3R's as the basis of a good education. A major portion of a student's learning time is spent listening, but we are not teaching them how to listen effectively. The courses we offer in speaking are too frequently concerned with the manner of the delivery and the use of correct grammar than they are with the delivery of a message that is received and understood by the audience. As a result many students reach maturity lacking the tools they need to communicate effectively in their environment.

Through an understanding of the process of communication students gain the skills that allow them to reason in a complex world. They are better able to make sense out of the overwhelming amount of information they are confronted with daily. They become information users. We need to provide these skills to our students at a time when their learning capacity is strong. As students become better able to process information they allow teachers to teach more effectively.

* NIE, 1984
** AAC, 1985
\+ From a summary of H5011, MASC Journal, Spring 1985

OVERVIEW

The program presented in this manual is the first in a series of six(6), ten(10) lesson programs designed to address these areas of learning. This program has two main objectives:

1. To develop in students a heightened awareness of the role communication plays in the totality of our lives.

2. To begin to develop in students an awareness of their responsibility for their own communication.

Communication is on-going. We carry feelings from one communication event into the next. For example, an upset with a co-worker or a spouse at 8:00 a.m. carries over into our reaction to another communication event with another person at 8:25 a.m. These reactions may not be appropriate for the new situation. We often tend to view these events as separate and unrelated. They are not! They are connected and interwoven throughout the rest of the day in our manner of dealing with other communication situations. How able are we to let go of the anger or hurt caused by the upset, to fully attend to other people and responsibilities only from the perspective of the new situation? Most often we are not able to be that objective. All our emotions, good and bad, have an effect on our manner of communicating. This is what is meant by the totality of communication. No communication event occurs in isolation. Each participant carries invisible baggage from past communication situations. We are all familiar with, and may even chuckle over, the image of the harrassed executive who comes home at the end of a hard day and kicks the dog who runs out to greet him.

When we become aware that we are dumping our invisible baggage where it does not belong we have taken the first step towards improving our communication behavior-improving in the sense of becoming more effective, better able to behave in ways which achieve what we want to achieve, here and now. An article in Nation's Business dealing with executive training states: "The first thing for behavioral changes is awareness-if you never reach the level of awareness you'll never change your behavior".*

* Nation's Business, October 1985, "Bottom Line 101"

Behavior is communication! So, we need to create an awareness in our students-an awareness that will allow them to make changes in their communication behavior toward more effective communication. When they learn how to do this they can begin to take a more active part in their own education.

Let's look at the second objective! Ignorance may lead to bliss, but responsibility can only be bred of awareness. In discussing this program with many educators it has been mentioned more than once that seventh graders really don't know that much about responsibility. Furthermore, in most areas of their lives they are given very little opportunity to have much of it. They go from home rules to school rules with little chance to make many of their own decisions. Hence, they don't have to feel responsible. They have little control over their own lives. What better place for them to begin than to take responsibility for their communication behavior!

This is one area of their lives over which they do have complete control. They can learn how to respond to situations they are involved in more productively through what comes out of their mouths, and through their own reactions. In developing awareness we create the need to accept responsibility. It becomes less easy to place blame elsewhere for difficult situations-less easy to remain the helpless victim of circumstances. We carry the oppurtunity to improve any situation with us in the form of more effective communication. "If I teach you how to work, to have good attitudes, to take responsibility for your own ideas, to communicate and to think a problem through, no matter what the subject matter I use..., then I'm giving you something you can use for a very long time. Those skills will never change."*

This program, and the five to follow, are designed to view communication as a process from the student level. It is not intended, nor should it be approached from any other perspective. Students have responsibility for, and control over, their communication behavior only-not that of any other person.

* Professor Jacob Neusner, "How to Guide Your Professor", Beacon Press (reprint in Readers Digest, September 1985 Points to Ponder)

METHOD

This first stage in the program series is designed to be very interactive. In one sense the classroom activities are more student directed in that discussion follows from their input, their interpretation of terms, situations and perceptions. It is most important that positions of right and wrong be kept to the barest minimum-if they can not be eliminated entirely. The most significant aspect of using this program is participation. Students (people) participate where and when they feel accepted. Feelings of being wrong can negate feelings of being accepted. The feeling of being judged makes participation more difficult for many students, and impossible for some. This does not mean that corrections should not be made. However, they should be viewed as 'adjustments' that are aimed towards a more effective way of dealing in a communication situation. As each lesson is described specific methods will be presented. However, throughout the program implementation keep in mind these two key points:

1. Interactive participation

2. No right or wrong, only adjustments for increased effectiveness.

It is vital to maintain a focus on the situation from the perspective of what the student can really do, and how they can communicate more effectively.

PROGRAM I

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SEVENTH GRADE-LEVEL I

LESSON #1 INTRODUCTION Course content is presented as students define and discuss such terms as communication process, non-verbal communication, and self-image, and deal with issues of trust and authority. In addition to dealing with communication at the content level students become exposed to the relational aspects of the process. They begin to develop an increased awareness of their responsibility in that process.

LESSON #2 STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONS The issues of trust and authority are dealt with in more depth. Students consider such questions as: How do they communicate with, perform for and listen to teachers they like, those they don't? What factors help create such feelings of like or dislike? Students work in groups to present a role-play situation dealing with an assigned student-teacher issue.

LESSON #3 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION Students expand their knowledge of the relational aspects of communication with the aid of a mime presentation. At the conclusion of the presentation the students discuss its content with the mime and the artifices he uses to create his message. Students discover how they have relied on non-verbal communication for years in establishing their feelings of trust as we explore its many subtleties.

LESSON #4 STUDENT-PARENT RELATIONS The many roles' parents play are presented. How are parents' expectations communicated? What non-verbal messages do students get from parents most often? How do students associate authority with the parent role? How do students perceive their family communication responsibility? Groups are assigned role-play situations dealing with family communication issues.

LESSON #5 SELF-IMAGE What is it? How is it formed? As we discuss what animals we see ourselves as being, and why, students deal with this aspect of themselves in a non-threatening way. Situations with the characters being various animals are assigned to groups. As students present a skit from the perspective of the animals they become more able to recognize the differences in individual perceptions. They begin to understand how these perceptions effect our responses.

LESSON #6-9 GROUP PRESENTATIONS Students, in groups, write and perform a skit which represents each of them as the person they see themselves being when they are adults. All presentations are video-taped and replayed at the conclusion of all skits. From this review of all performances students learn to give and receive constructive feedback from their classmates. They receive timely information on how their behavior is perceived by others, and compare it to their intent.

LESSON #10 REVIEW AND EVALUATION The terms in LESSON #1 are redefined as part of the program evaluation. How has student perception of communication as a process grown and/or changed during the program? Do students see themselves as part of the process? Have their feelings about teacher/parent authority changed? Are there any differences in student awareness of communication responsibility? This lesson can be regarded as a check for mastery of the basic concepts before continuing on with further programs.

LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION Course content is presented as students define and discuss such terms as communication process, non-verbal communication and self-image, and deal with issues of trust and authority. In addition to dealing with communication at the content level students become exposed to the relational aspects of the process. They begin to develop an increased awareness of their responsibility in that process.

METHOD Terms to define:

1. Communication
2. Non-verbal communication
3. Self-image
4. Trust
5. Authority
6. Communication process
7. Listening
8. Feedback

Students define these terms individually, on paper. They are collected and saved until the last lesson when they are redefined as part of a check for understanding of course content (mastery). As students discuss their definitions one student is chosen to write class definitions on the board (a different student for each word). When no new meanings are forthcoming one student looks up the official meaning in the dictionary and reads it aloud. (Again, a different student for each word.)

When defining "communication process" a model is a very effective way to clarify the concept for students. The model consists of six basic components:

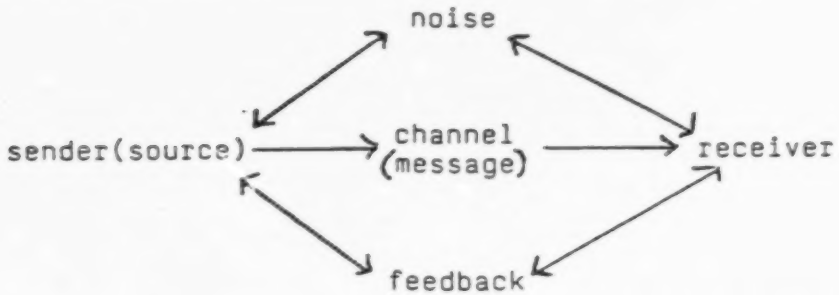
a. source(sender)
b. receiver
c. message
d. channel
e. feedback
f. noise

The first four components are self explanatory. "Feedback" is any returned message that tells the original sender how the message was received. For example, was the message

received, understood and acted upon exactly as the sender intended? Was some part of the message misunderstood? What adjustments need to be made? What new message(s) need to be sent?

"Noise" is any interference that comes between the sender and the receiver that causes the message to be misunderstood or require retransmission. This interference may be physical, physiological, psychological or semantical.

The basic structure can be represented as diagramed below.



As the communication process progresses the sender and receiver are constantly changing places, playing both roles. It is important that students understand this interrelationship.

At this point a message about "messages" may be helpful. Messages come in many forms (verbal, symbolic, non-verbal), and are perceived through many channels (the five senses). Verbal channels carry content, represented meanings (what one wants to communicate). Non-verbal channels simultaneously carry both messages which refine the interpretation of the content and the relational components of the messages. Meanings attributed to messages vary with both the context and past experiences related to the messages. We communicate for reasons-the activity is purposive. Therefore, it is important to clarify what we want to happen from a communication encounter in order to decide how to communicate most effectively for the desired outcome.

The following classroom activity will aid student understanding of the communication process. Have students participate in listing four or five senders with appropriate messages on the board. Using the communication model follow the communication process through with the possible channels, receivers, noise and feedback for each. Some examples are given only to stimulate ideas.

EXAMPLES:

(S)SENDER
(C)CHANNEL
(M)MESSAGE
(R)RECEIVER
(N)NOISE
(F)FEEDBACK

A. A teacher(S) is giving an assignment(M), verbally(C). Students(R) can't hear because two students are talking to each other(N). "We didn't hear what you said!"(F)

B. A mother(S) calls(C) up the stairs to her child(R) to come down and feed the dog(M). The child has the record player turned up very loudly(N), and yells back, "What did you say?"(F)

C. A girl(S) is calling her girlfriend(R) on the telephone(C) to ask her to come over(M). Her friends baby brother is crying in the background(N). The friend responds, "No, I don't know what the homework is!"(F)

D. A truck driver(S) is talking on his CB(C) to other drivers(R) to tell them there is police car in a hidden location(M). Some drivers have staticy receivers(N). "Come back?"(F)

For a home assignment students design their own communication model having all these components. It is important to note that although noise and feedback may not always be immediate or present in every communication situation the potential for them is. This may be a difficult concept for students. They should be encouraged to consider the kinds of noise and feedback that would be possible given the sender, the message, channel and the receiver. Noise and feedback can also be non-verbal, such as the pain of a toothache(noise), or a frown(feedback).

The statement, "You cannot not communicate!" may be introduced here, although it will be dealt with in more depth through LESSON #3-NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION. Ask students what they think this means. Can they think of situations where it may not be true? (Even sleeping you are communicating-you are tired. Body position in sleep can be relaxed, tense, restless, etc. Silence is more eloquent than words.)

This lesson ends with an exploration of the totality of communication. We do not communicate in separate little pieces. Communication is ongoing,has no beginning or end. Students of this age don't understand that happy or sad feelings from one communication situation carry

on to the next communication event with another person at another time on the same day, or even in the same week or month.

PURPOSE With this lesson we introduce the concept of communication as a process. In today's world the amount of communication material we are exposed to is overwhelming. Most of it comes to us as information only. What should we do with it? How do we deal with it? To how much of it should we attend? What about information overload? How do we determine how much of a role we play in the communication process? How do we distinguish between the process and simple information to which no response is necessary, possible, or even desireable? In defining the terms we begin to look at communication from a different perspective.

When students understand that feelings from one communication event effect future events they begin to realize they can make changes for more productive communication exchanges, and that they can have more control through their own communication behavior. It is important to remember that this is only the beginning-we are just beginning to look at the possibilities of making differences through the way we communicate. We are creating the awareness.

LESSON TWO

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONS The issues of trust and authority are dealt with in more depth. Students consider such questions as: How do they communicate with, perform for and listen to teachers they like, those they don't? What factors help create such feelings of like or dislike? Students work in groups to present a role-play situation dealing with an assigned student teacher issue.

METHOD: Students think of the teacher that was the most favorite one they ever had. Under a column headed TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS on the board are listed all the things the students mention that made that teacher their favorite. (No names, please!) Under another column headed STUDENT BEHAVIOR are listed all the ways the students mention that they behaved for that teacher. (Answers range quite widely on this one.) The same procedure is then followed for the least favorite teacher they ever had. (Again, no names!) Do not indicate they will be doing this exercise for their least favorite teacher until they have completed the listings for their favorite teacher.

Most often there will be a direct relationship between positive behavior for the favorite teacher and negative behavior for the least favorite one. When this is blatantly obvious to the students there may be a moment of dead silence as they realize the reciprocal relationships. For the least favorite teacher there may be claims that students did try to behave better for that teacher and nothing happened. Go back to the focus of the program, and the fact that we are looking at the communication process from the perspective of the student and what they can do. Stress that again. There are no guarantees! Students have control only over themselves, not the other person. Most often they will say they did not continue with their improved behavior they they did not see any immediate changes in the teacher's behavior.

EXAMPLES FOR ROLE-PLAY Potential situations are endless. Students can make up their own. The examples are only to stimulate ideas.

A. Two students work together on a project. One works very hard and the other does very little. A poor grade is received by both. How does the hard working student deal with this?

B. A student doesn't do home work for the third time in a week, and is given detention. What kind of communicatin can occur?

C. A student is flunking math and must participate in a parent-teacher conference. What would this look like from the student's point of view?

D. A student gets praised in front of the class for a fine presentation. After class the student gets called "teacher's pet" and other names by classmates. How does the student deal with this?

PURPOSE: As students play yhe part of the teacher or parent and the imaginary student he/she can get a glimpse of the other side of the issue. "If I were the teacher what would I do? What would I expect?" When the issue is seen from a different perspective the student can begin to see how he/she might communicate differently under similar circumstances for a more rewarding outcome.

LESSON THREE

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION Students expand their knowledge of the relational aspects of communication with the aid of a mime presentation. At the conclusion of the presentation the students discuss its content with the mime, and the artifices he uses to create his message. As we explore its many subtleties students discover the extent to which they have relied on non-verbal communication to establish feelings of trust.

METHOD: Ideally, a real live mime is the best, most dramatic way of presenting the non-verbal aspects of communication. This is entertaining as well as informative. If this is not possible a video of a mime presentation is available. If the video is used the teacher will need to stand in for the mime in the discussion of the presentation. What did the students think was happening? Why did they think that? If a real mime is used the presentation should deal with a common situation that all students can relate to.

The video has the following sequence:

1. Student coming home from school.
2. Getting milk and cookies (a snack).
3. Going upstairs.
4. Getting prepared to do homework.
5. Beginning homework.
6. Getting distracted by the cat (a pet).
7. Getting reprimanded by a parent.
8. Resuming homework.
9. Getting up to look out the window at friends.
10. Getting reprimanded again.
11. Getting back to homework.
12. Finished at last. Satisfaction!

Non-verbal communication takes many forms: body motion, body posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, input from the five senses. Have students discuss how each of these forms could be used to express some common emotions; happiness, sorrow, anger and any others they choose. Encourage students to become more aware of how they consciously "read" and use non-verbal aspects of communication. Consider how the non-verbal aspects of messages change the meaning that would be attributed to that message from one situation to another. How do students think trust and authority are communicated non-verbally? Remind them of the saying, "You cannot not communicate!" Perhaps this makes more sense now.

Our non-verbal behavior tells a story all by itself. It conveys a relational and emotional meaning quite independent of the verbal message content.

PURPOSE: The non-verbal component of communication is a very powerful, not to be underestimated, aspect of the communication process. Without being consciously aware of its effects we have been responding to it from infancy. This lesson dramatizes its potency to encourage students to consider non-verbal communication as a very important factor in the full process. There is a belief that says: "If the verbal message and the non-verbal cues do not match, go with the non-verbal." This is an aspect of communication that seems to negate listening. How effective is not listening? When could(should) it be used? Can this be accurately determined before receiving a message? This lesson is designed to aid students in recognizing the many forms of non-verbal communication.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Students are to watch a SIT-COM, any one they like. They then write a short paragraph describing the situation. As points of discussion students consider how they, and an adult they know, would have handled the situation differently. This is in preparation for a discussion of "roles" in the next lesson.

LESSON FOUR

STUDENT-PARENT RELATIONS The many roles parents play are explored. How are parents' expectations communicated? What non-verbal messages do students get from parents most often? How do students perceive their family communication responsibility? Groups are assigned role-play situations dealing with family communication issues.

METHOD: The lesson begins with a discussion of what the term role means. Students then list (on the board) the roles they see their parents carrying out. (The list can go on forever so you may wish to limit it in some manner-each student lists one role, the list only goes to twenty (20), etc.) It should be pointed out that while the parent is being a parent to them, they are also being friends, employers, employees, co-workers to and with other people. Does the parent "belong" only to them?
For example: The student goes home from a bad day at school and really wants to talk to mom. When he/she gets home he/she discovers that mom is in a rush to leave for an emergency meeting of the school committee. The student is told he/she must babysit for his/her little brother. (He/she is still in the role of student and wants to be mothered. Mom is in the role of committee memeber and needs the student to immediately fall into the role of older child in the family.) By the time mom comes home three(3) hours later the student has had a chance to talk with a friend about the bad day and feels better, and mom has fulfilled her duty as committee member and is ready to slip into her "mom" role. Now, they both are in complementary roles and are able to communicate from mutual expectations of each other.

Another way of illustrating the way that roles affect communication and can cause conflicts is through a comparison of the two games of soccer and baseball. Ask students to imagine they are all dressed and mentally prepared to play a soccer match when they are suddenly called away to play on their baseball team which is short players. The student has no chance to change into the right uniform, but must run across the street to the baseball field and begin the game. What sort of problems could be encountered in terms of differences in rules, language, uniforms, equipment, physical layout, team expectations and any other thing the students can think of as differences between the two sports. Students relate very well to this example.

Students can now continue the lesson with a discussion of the SIT-COMs they watched. One student relates the basic story line and others who watched the same program add what they feel may have been left out, or what they felt was important. Even in this perceptions vary greatly! Using the situations as presented in the SIT-COMs a variety of family issues and ways of dealing with them can be discussed somewhat removed from the students direct involvement. Using this method students can be more objective, and still have the opportunity to view such situations from different perspectives.

PURPOSE: Students and parents develop patterns of communication that they seem to be locked into by the time students have reached this age. As the child grows into his/her teen years he/she requires more answers because he/she is exposed to a bigger world that has more questions. The primary place to receive those answers is in the home, from parents. (It is often the case that answers are not available there, however.) As students recognize that parents are more than "just" parents they can consider different ways of expressing themselves to those parents, more effective ways of asking the questions which will aid them in getting the answers they need. They learn more about communication responsibility in the family setting. Granted, this does not happen over night. At this point we are only concerned with presenting some other ways of looking at family relationships through the students own communication. They can control and be responsible only for their own behaviors, not someone else's.

Another way to look at the issue of communication responsibility is the fact that parents have many more responsibilities than students due to the larger number of roles they must "play". This increased responsibility brings increased pressures that affect communication. Timing of communication is important for a student to consider. Asking your mother if you can go to the movies when your little brother has just cut his head, or when your mother is preparing a five course meal for company, for example, is not likely to produce the desired results.

EXAMPLES FOR STUDENT-PARENT ROLE-PLAYS:

A. Your parents tell you you have to babysit your little sister on Saturday night, but you and your best friend had made plans to go to the movies. What would you do?

B. You, your brother and your sister are arguing over who should watch what program on TV. Your father tells

you to stop arguing or none of you will watch TV for the rest of the week. What method would you use to settle the problem?

C. You were supposed to be home from the school dance at 10:30. Your friend's brother was going to take you home, but he didn't show up until 10:45. You didn't call your parents. What happens when you get home at 11:00?

D. It is your turn to feed the cat and dog and let them out for the evening. Your parents are not home. A friend calls and wants you to come right over to see their new family car. You yell to your brother to tend to the animals and dash out the door. When you come home two hours later your parents are home, your brother is not, and the animals have made quite a mess of the kitchen. What story do you tell your parents?

LESSON FIVE

SELF-IMAGE What is it? How is it formed? As we discuss what animals we see ourselves as being, and why, students deal with this aspect of themselves in a non-threatening way. Situations with the characters being various animals are assigned to groups. As students present a skit from the perspective of the animals they become more able to recognize the differences in individual perceptions. They begin to understand how these perceptions affect our responses.

METHOD: In using animals as a way of describing themselves students are more able to be objective about themselves, and to think of their behavior as part of their self-image. An important part of this lesson is learning to laugh at yourself. This requires the ability to accept yourself as you are, with the understanding that you are growing and developing. This is a vital point to stress to the students-they are indeed growing and developing in great chunks during this period of their lives. It is now that they are evolving into the people they will become as adults. Perhaps you, as the teacher, can relate an experience in your life that taught you to laugh at yourself! (Mine occurred when I was wallpapering with a friend and stepped off the ladder right into the bucket of water.)

Ask a question such as: "Do you think a cat sits around all day wishing it was a lion?" If "NO!"-why not? If "YES!"-why? This leads into a discussion of how self perception effects how we communicate. A lion is very powerful and, therefore, acts aggressive and challenging. He's no pussycat! If we see ourselves as a lion we too, will act accordingly. The same is true if we see ourselves like a pussycat. In communication there are times when the pussycat approach may be more effective than the lion approach (and, surely, vice versa). It is also important to realize that the "lion" approach may be being used to mask a sense of insecurity. Feelings of insecurity can breed defensive and aggressive behavior.

The following are only suggestions of possible animal role-play skits. Any situations with any animals all are suitable as long as the animals are dissimilar enough to allow enough discussion in the process of resolving the issue. In this lesson it is the process of coming to a resolution that is important. The resolution itself is unimportant, only in so far as it is one that is mutually arrived at based on recognizably significant

criteria.

A. A goat, a chicken, and a tiger talking about what the ideal world would look like.

B. A giraffe, a pig, and an owl trying to decide what kind of a house to build for them all to live in together.

C. A dog, a mouse, and a lion discussing what they would do if there was a nuclear war, and how they would help each other.

D. An elephant, a cat, and an eagle trying to decide where they could all go on a vacation together.

E. A whale, a mole, and a horse discussing what kind of school they can send their children to together.

F. A sheep, an ant, and a pelican trying to decide which restaurant to go to for supper.

G. A hippopotamus, a chipmunk, and an ostrich making a decision on what kind of vehicle to buy for them all to use.

PURPOSE: In considering themselves from the safety of an animal disguise students can see themselves more objectively, can get a different view of themselves. This perspective can help them understand how the way they see themselves effects the way they communicate. In sharing this perspective (voluntarily) with their classmates they gain insight into the perspective others have, and, thus, why they communicate and behave the way they do. A person who sees themself as a pussycat communicates quite differently than someone who sees themself as a lion.

LESSON SIX-NINE

GROUP PRESENTATIONS Students, in groups, must write and perform a skit which represents each of them as the person they see themselves being when they are adults. All presentations will be video-taped and replayed at the conclusion of all skits. From this review of all performances students learn to give and receive constructive feedback from their classmates. They receive timely information on how their behavior is perceived by others, and compare it to their intent.

METHOD: Students write down and pass in who they see themselves being (in terms of occupation and personality) between the ages of 25-30. They are then assigned groups, each having 3-5 members, depending on class size. A minimum of three(3) groups is suggested for a wider variety of situations to be presented and reviewed. Each group decides how their various roles and personalities as adults can fit together in a skit. It is important that these aspects are clearly identifiable as the skit is developed. If possible, they should not tell anyone outside of the group what role they are playing.

Some sort of system for determining order of presentations should be established at the outset. A lottery would be one way. Students could also volunteer for a particular time frame, given the total time available. Whatever the order, there is to be no feedback until all presentations are completed. Each skit should be shown completely and separately. The other students give feedback on who they thought was doing what and why they thought that. If the feedback does not match the intent of the player suggestions on how the player could have performed differently are in order. These suggestions are to be given as constructive criticism, and focus on clarifying the players portrayal of character. In giving feedback the student should be clear on just what it was in the presentation they are talking about. This is how the performer will best be able to match viewer perception to intent. The critique should remain focused on the messages communicated, not on any artifices or props used, or on how good an actor someone was. It should consider what the message was that the group wanted to convey, and whether or not the audience did indeed receive the intended message.

Teacher feedback amplifies student feedback and questions skit group members. It also must include suggestions

on ways in which the weak areas could be addressed more effectively.

PURPOSE: Receiving feedback at the time that a student can view their own actions makes input much more meaningful. The perception of the performance from other students' perspectives can be matched with the student performer's intent. Was the message the student intended to convey, the same one the audience received? If not, how did it differ? What could be done to more closely match the performers intent with the viewers perception? How valuable it is to see ourselves as others see us! When this happens, are students willing and able to make adjustments to become more effective communicators? The younger students are when they have such information available to them, the more easily they can adjust their communication behavior for more positive, productive results in their own lives and educational process.

LESSON TEN

REVIEW AND EVALUATION The terms in Lesson #1 are redefined as part of the program evaluation. How has student perception of communication as a process grown and/or changed during the program? This lesson can be regarded as a check for mastery of the basic concepts before continuing on with further programs. Do students see themselves as part of the process? Have their feelings about teacher-parent authority changed? Are there any differences in student awareness of communication responsibility?

METHOD: This is a review in the traditional sense of the word. Students take a paper and pencil test. They define the original list of terms from Lesson #1 and a few other terms introduced during the program. A sample test is included in this manual, but a variety of questions are possible. The important thing is to test for student understanding of communication as a process, an interactive process.

PURPOSE: Before moving on to further program modules it is important that students have a fairly firm foundation in the basics as presented in this program. It may be necessary to review certain areas of the program if more than 25% of the students are unclear in a particular area. Do not try to move on if key terms, key concepts are not understood. Students must also be able to clearly relate that communication is a behavior over which they have a large degree of control. They, alone, determine what they communicate when they fully understand this vital concept.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

In the process of designing this program a specific question arose on more than one occassion: "What good is it going to do to teach students how to communicate more effectively when their parents and teachers do not have the skills we are trying to teach the students?" It will be beneficial to include the parents in the program as much as possible at this time by letting them know what their kids are doing, and what the program is designed to do. There is a suggested PARENT LETTER included, as well as a follow-up questionnaire to facilitate parent participation. It is also possible to offer a parent workshop of about two hours to the parents of the students who are participating in the program.

The letter should, ideally, go home with the students at least one(1) week before the program begins. The questionnaire should be included at this time to help parents know what types of behaviors to look for as the students is working with the program. A copy of the questionnaire and a reminder to return it to the teacher should be sent home at the end of Lesson #9. This will allow the questionnaire to be returned in connection with the completion of the program and the student test.

There are two(2) questionnaire formats included in this manual. FORM ONE should go home with the initial PARENT LETTER. FORM TWO should be sent home at the end of Lesson #9 to act as a reminder of the program, as well as provide a copy of the questionnaire for those parents who have misplaced the original.

PARENT LETTER

Your seventh grader is taking part in a ten(10) week program, one period per week, dealing with communication skills. This program is the first in a series of six(6). We would like your help! Included with this letter is a questionnaire. Please use it to note any changes in your childs communication habits. Are they talking more? Less? Are they listening any differently? Have they discussed this program with you? Are there any differerences at all in how he/she is communicating with family members?

Also, would you plese note on the questionnaire if you are interested in participating in a parent workshop in connection with this program? Depending on parent interest, a two(2) hour workshop can be made available. A copy of the questionnaire will be sent home at the end of the program to facilitate your participation and assistance with the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!

If you have any questions at all about this program, please call the school. We will be glad to discuss it with you.

_____

Teachers Signature

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Did your child discuss this program with you?_____

If "Yes!" How?_____

_____

Have you noticed any changes in your childs communication behavior?_____If "Yes!" What?_____

_____

_____

Is your child more willing to discuss issues with you and other household members?_____If "Yes!" Could you give an example?_____

_____

_____

Have you initiated any discussion about this program with your child?_____If "Yes!" What happened?_____

_____

_____

_____

Would you be interested in participating in a parent workshop of about two(2) hours in connection with this program?_____

_____
Parent Signature

Form One

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

For the past three(3) months your seventh grade child has been participating in a Communication Skills program one period per week. This program is the first in a series of six(6) such programs designed to develope effective communication behaviors in students grades 7-9. It is a new program, and it is important to evaluate it from many different aspects. Your input is a valuable addition to that evaluation. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and return this form to school. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Did your child discuss this program with you?_____

If "Yes!" How?_____

_____

Have you noticed any changes in your childs communication behavior?_____If "Yes!" What?_____

_____

_____

Is your child more willing to discuss issues with you and other household members?_____If "Yes!" Could you give an example?_____

_____

_____

Have you initiated any discussion about this program with your child?_____If "Yes!" What happened?_____

_____

_____

_____

Would you be interested in participating in a parent workshop of about two(2) hours in connection with this program?_____

_____
Parent Signature

Form Two

STUDENT MASTERY TEST

Define the following terms:

1. AUTHORITY: _____

_____

2. COMMUNICATION: _____

_____

3. COMMUNICATION PROCESS: _____

_____

4. FEEDBACK: _____

_____

5. CHANNEL: _____

_____

6. LISTENING: _____

_____

7. NOISE: _____

_____

8. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: _____

_____

9. SELF-IMAGE: _____

_____

10. TRUST: _____

_____

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How does the role a person is "playing" effect the way they communicate? _____

_____

Student Mastery Test (con.)

2. What are the main parts (at least four) of the communication model?_____

_____

3. What is one possible explanation for the differences in the way people perceive situations?_____

_____

Answer the following statements TRUE or FALSE.

1. You communicate better with people you trust. _____

2. You communicate differently with people you see as having authority than with those who don't. _____

3. The role you "play" has no effect on the way you communicate. _____

4. Body movements and facial expressions are both examples of non-verbal communication. _____

5. Feedback is not important to the communication process. _____

6. In general, students behave worse for their favorite teachers than they do for their least favorite teachers. _____

7. How you communicate is not important. _____

8. "Noise", in the communication process, can also be a headache. _____

9. One thing you have total and complete control over is the way you communicate. _____

10. Behavior is communication. _____

11. Your self-image cannot be changed. _____

12. A frown is not an example of non-verbal communication. _____

13. "Noise" is present in every communication situation. _____

14. Your self-image is effected by the attitudes of the people you care about. _____

Student Mastery Test (con.)

15. Our perception of a situation is always the same as the perception of all the other people involved in the situation. _____

16. It is true that, "You cannot not communicate!" _____

17. If the verbal and the non-verbal information communicated to you do not match, you should believe the verbal. _____

18. The communication process has a beginning and an end. _____

19. It is important to understand the other person's point of view if you want to communicate effectively with them. _____

20. The channel used effects the communicated message. _____

DEFINITIONS

AUTHORITY: The right to command and enforce obedience. One who has special knowledge. An expert or influential person.

CHANNEL: Means by which message stimuli move from source to receiver, i.e. light waves, sound waves, etc.

COMMUNICATION: The transmission and interpretation of ideas or information represented in perceivable form, as by speech or writing. Passage or transmission of messages to be interpreted between persons or places.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS: (Process) Continuous actions which bring about particular results and are affected by those results so that the same actions, repeated exactly, would not lead to exactly the same results again. Dynamic, ongoing, everchanging interactive relationships.

FEEDBACK: The return of part of the output of a system for purposes of modification. Return signals from the receiver to the source.

LISTENING: Being attentive so as to hear and accurately interpret the meanings which sources of oral or spoken messages intend to convey.

NOISE: Any physical, physiological, psychological, or semantic distortion or interference with a message.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: Utilizing codes other than language and words to represent meanings to be communicated.

SELF-IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM: A person's idea of himself or herself. A person's answer to the question: "Who am I?" One's perception of self. Pride or worth of one's self.

TRUST: A confident reliance on the honesty and dependability of another person. Faith.